

CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL

MEETING: December 15, 2009, 6PM

Begin: 6:15PM

End: 7:50PM

MINUTES: Charley called the meeting to order and requested a review and edits to the November 2009 meeting minutes. Following the review, the minutes were approved unanimously by the group.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Jason reviewed recent activities of the CAC. As part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's new Cultural Investment Portfolio (CIP – formerly the MCC Organizational Support Grant), CAC was selected to participate at the prestigious *Partner Level* and was one of the first arts organization state-wide asked to attend a site visit as a peer organization for ARTWorks! in New Bedford, MA. As part of the program, Jason announced that CAC will also host a site visit from the MCC, possibly scheduled during a First Monday @ CAC Gallery, public art dedication or similar event in 2010. CAC also recently participated in supporting and presenting a free screening of entries to the *Boston Latino International Film Festival* at the new Cambridge Public Library Main Branch theater space. Jason reported that CAC recently organized a Public Art Exchange meeting intended as a forum to hear from and educate the community on the work that CAC does relative to public art and the Percent-for-Art program. He thanked staff members Lillian Hsu and Jeremy Gaucher for their efforts with this initiative. Jason also announced the hiring of Rika Smith McNally as permanent part-time public art conservator. To get the New Year off to a good start he suggested a CAC party in January or February.

CAC GRANT PROGRAM: Jason thanked members of the board, who were members of this year's grant panels: Lori Lander, Andrew Mroczek, and Matthew Weinberg. He explained the progression and actions taken related to the program and application review and submitted the following recommendation to the Board for consideration: Thirty-four (34) of the 110 applications would move forward, 29 of which are project-based and 5 of which are PASS grant applications. Under the recommended scenario, a funding cap of \$2,000 would be set and all projects under \$2k would be funded at 75% of the original ask with PASS projects receiving 100% of original requests. Jason noted a spike in applications overall, particularly in the Theater & Dance and Visual Art, Film & Video disciplines. The total amount of grant money requested was \$243,834; the total grant money available is \$51,389.25, much of which is provided by the city of Cambridge. Jason provided members with a graph comparing current year statistics and recommendation information to that of the previous 4-years.

After a discussion about the grant process at least six board members volunteered to be part of a committee to reassess the application guidelines relative to several issues. Among the issues raised were that a large number of grants are awarded to established organizations (compared to those given to smaller organizations or to individuals). The suggestion was made that more weight be given to need and to the transformative effect of funding from CAC with a focus on questions such as how a grant from CAC might take an artist or organization to the next level. Other suggestions were funding fewer projects for more money or the funding of different fields in alternate years. Jason said that steps had been taken to prevent organizations from applying for the same project more than two years in a row and from individuals and organizations receiving grants in more than one category in the same year, which was a possibility several years earlier.

Following the discussion, Jason agreed to follow-up with members to set a meeting for a sub-committee to work with staff to review and make recommendations relative to the 2010 grant guidelines and application. Charley asked if there was further conversation or if the group was prepared to vote on the suggested recommendation. Aliyah made a motion to accept the recommend funding scenario and Andrew seconded. All members voted to accept the recommendations and funding scenario for 2010.

Members Present:

Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro, Barbara Baker, Phyllis Bretholtz, Lori Damon, Aliyah Gary, Lori Lander, Andrew Mroczek, Charles Norris, Matthew Weinberg. Staff: Jason Weeks, Executive Director

Members Absent:

James Lawson, Jeffrey Walker